

9 Countries
34 US Missionaries
51 National Missionaries
1 Great Commission

Jeff and Joanna Davis

- Works of Evangelism
- Establishing Churches
- Equipping Nationals



Cancun, Mexico

EXHORT EQUIP

ENLIST ENGAGE

May 2022



a breath of Fresh Air
JEFF DAVIS, DIRECTOR

Did you hear that loud sigh on Monday, April 18? It was the sound of relief echoing throughout our land as a federal district court in Florida vacated the CDC's 14-month-long mask mandate for air travel and public transport. A pilot on board a JetBlue flight was recorded stating, "We just got an announcement a few minutes ago. Some of you may have seen the press release today that a judge overturned the mask mandate. My company announced that at this moment if you choose to, you may remove your mask. Facemasks are no longer required on public transportation." This announcement was followed by celebration by those on board and flight attendants walking down the aisle collecting the masks of ecstatic passengers. I'm not sure where you stand on masks and their effectiveness, but I for one felt like I had been given back a small portion of my freedom. Now that the federal mask mandates were ruled unconstitutional, in the days following, passengers and crew would make their own choices. Some would still choose to wear a mask, but many were grateful that it was now considered a matter of personal choice.

Just five days earlier, as snow covered the ground, my wife Joanna drove me to the airport in **Salt Lake City, Utah**. We had enjoyed a couple of precious weeks visiting with our son Caleb and his family. It was a joy to preach for **Pastor Greg Baker** at the **Fellowship Bible Church** and to visit **Gospel Hope Church**, pastored by **Danny Brooks**. It had been a busy couple of weeks of study as I was preparing for my trip to **Cancun, Mexico**. As Joanna dropped me off, I grabbed my backpack, my carry-on, and my suitcase. I normally like to pack light, but I had packed for two different climates that were polar extremes. In addition, I had packed several books that I was taking for Marco to distribute to his national pastors. I hugged Joanna, donned my required face covering, and made my way quickly through baggage check and security. I had found an \$85 discount flight from Salt Lake City to Cancun that would take me through **Denver**. Someone said, "You get what you pay for." I had to sit around the airport in Denver for ten hours awaiting my 12:55 a.m. flight. Denver International ranks as the third busiest airport in the world and it was hopping. I did not have a lounge pass, and could not pay to get into one, but God in His good providence allowed me to find a quiet place upstairs. It was a soft chair, next to a column with an electrical outlet, away from the crowds. Praise the Lord! I was able to get a lot of work done.

continued



pastorjeffdavis.com

EMU International
209 Roberts Road
Taylors, SC 29687
(864) 268-9267
office@emuinternaional.org

Jeff & Joanna Davis
119 Oak Wind Circle
Greer, SC 29651
(864) 617-7156
jeff@emuinternational.org
mrspastorjd@gmail.com

The flight through the night wasn't too bad and I was able to doze a little, but not really sleep. We landed early in Cancún, where I again breezed through passport control and baggage claim. **Marco Nuñez** was pulling up to the door as I walked out of the terminal. The temperature was in the low 80s with a gentle breeze blowing. The Bougainvillea and Plumeria were in full bloom. I removed my mask and took in a deep breath of fresh air.

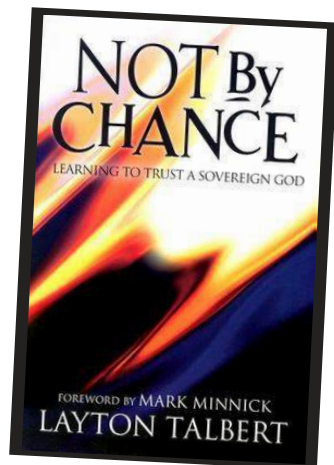
After a big hug from Marco, we loaded up the car and headed to his house where we would meet his wife **Gwendolyn** who was preparing for us a delicious breakfast. I had been looking forward to her cooking since I first ordered my plane tickets a few months earlier. I wish I had time to describe each of our meals, but this isn't meant to be a food journal.

As we drove, we discussed our plans for the next few days. Marco's church is celebrating its **25th Anniversary**. This past year, thanks to Marco's generous donors, the Lord blessed the church with two new passenger vans which were much needed. They also were able to purchase property for the new church plant, which Lord willing will be launched in August. God also saved **six precious souls!**



We drove about thirty minutes to get to his house. Cancún is a city that has in the past fifty years been transformed from a small fishing village to a thriving tourist destination where nearly one million people now live and work. We were driving through "the Real Cancún." Just a few days earlier, the US State Department had issued their Travel Advisory for April. "Exercise increased caution due to crime. Criminal activity and violence may occur in any location, at any time, including in popular tourist destinations." At no time in my trips to Cancún have I felt unsafe, but we have tried to always exercise caution.

Marco meets from 9:00 a.m. to noon, four days per week, with **Daniel Lopez**, his newest church planter, and with **Toño Alvarado**, his youth pastor. They have been studying the doctrine of God's providence, and Layton Talbert's book, "**Not By Chance.**" Marco and I would have several opportunities over the next few days to witness God's providence in action.



Talbert states, "The providence of God is the bedrock belief that enables us to confidently encounter life's tragedies, triumphs, and perplexities." What a description of life and ministry.

We arrived at his house and enjoyed breakfast, and then a long nap. The rest of the day we worked to prepare for the busy days ahead. In total, I would **speak sixteen times**. While Marco received a break from preparing, he still had to translate for me, and we would try to go over each of the messages before speaking.

Friday morning, we got up early and made our way to the Port of Cancún for a three-mile walk. I had also been looking forward to these daily opportunities to not only exercise our bodies, but also our minds and spirits. That afternoon, I had the privilege of meeting Marco's sister **Sonia** and her husband **René**. They had come to house sit for Marco's sister **Angela** who was on a trip to the Holy Land.



I had the privilege of speaking that night for their **Good Friday service**. There were around **110 in attendance**. The singing was enthusiastic, and it seemed like the entire church participated in the time of reciting Scripture memory and going through the order of the books of the Bible. They do that every service. The services are broadcast over **Facebook Live** and several tuned in who were not present.

The **children** were dismissed to a side room, but Gwendolyn opened the window so that they could listen and participate in the preaching time. I preached on the thief on the cross who was saved. I titled the message, "Swinging on Rotten Vines," and told



the story about swinging on vines when I was a child, but one was rotten and resulted in me taking a nasty fall. I talked about the things that people put their trust in that will not get them to heaven and then shared the reason that the thief was saved. He saw himself as a sinner, totally guilty, and he placed his trust in Jesus alone. Afterward, Gwendolyn asked the kids if they learned anything. One person said, "He wasn't saved because of his family, or because he was baptized, or because he did good things." After the service, Joanna sent me a photo of **my three-year-old grandson Dax**, watching Papa preach.



Sunday, we celebrated the Resurrection with two wonderful services. Again, the church was full and there was an energy in the air. Marco has enlisted different men to lead the Scripture memory and books of the Bible time. My heart was thrilled to see and hear so many people quoting the Scripture. They have committed eight pages with about twenty-five verses per page to memory. This year they are starting on their ninth page. For the morning message, I preached on **Doubting Thomas**, a message that I titled, "Do you Believe?" I used an object lesson in which I had a can with \$10 in American money, two five-dollar bills. I had **Oscar**, one of the men in the church help me. I told him that I had \$10 in the can and that I was going to give it to him. All he had to do was tell me that he believed me. When I asked him if he believed me, he said no. After a big laugh, I assured him that I was telling the truth. People who know me consider me to be a man of character. Jeff speaks the truth. I also gave him a piece of paper with the words written on it that this can holds \$10. I even showed the money to a couple of people up front, Sonia and René, and they vouched for me. I handed the can to Oscar and allowed him to shake it and examine it without opening it. Based on his examination, he thought that there could be \$10 in there. I had given him four witnesses to build



his faith. Did he believe? He said yes, and with a little bit of a surprised look, he took the \$10. Following the message, Marco was about to dismiss us, when Oscar could not contain himself and wanted to speak. With a moist spot in his eye, he talked about salvation being a free gift. He had been a recipient of this gracious gift and he wanted to share it. He had René come forward and gave him \$5. Marco and I both were thinking that we could not have planned it better. What an illustration for us to take that which we have been given, the gracious gift of the gospel, and to share that with others. Sunday night was another practical message as we learned about the two on the Road to Emmaus in a message that I called, "An Eye-Opening Experience."

Marco's church, **the First Fundamental Baptist Church of Cancún** began with him visiting with the workers who had come into Cancún from outside cities and villages. He would take them bottled water and witness to them. Some people laughed at him, but some listened. Several were saved and a church was launched. Marco then began a Bible school to train the nationals to reach their own people. He now supports 7 of his graduates who have been commissioned by his church to begin churches across the Yucatán Peninsula:

NATIONAL PASTORS



Ciro Alvarado
Santa Martha, Chiapas



Pascual Balam
Chemax, Yucatán



Tomas Noh Family
Playa del Carmen, Quintana Roo



Daniel Lopez
Bochil, Chiapas



Vicente Puc Family
Valladolid, Yucatan



Jose Luis Uc
Becal, Campeche



Toño Alvarado
Cancun, Quintana Roo



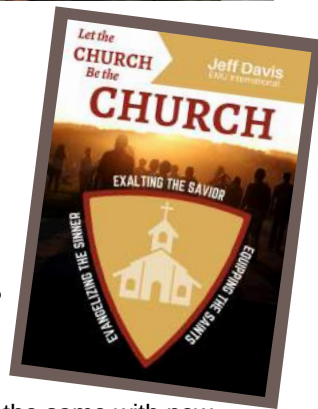
Marco Nuñez
Cancun, Quintana Roo



On Monday morning, the pastors (students), arrived at the church. **Ciro** was not able to attend as his home is on the Guatemala border, a two-day journey away. Over the next three days from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., we would hold twelve sessions, four per day. The theme for our training was, “**Let the Church be the Church.**” Not only had I prepared these lessons, but I had also wanted to make sure that they were translated into Spanish. Each man was given outlines and notes to not only use for these sessions but also to share with their church. My goal was to connect the **heart** (devotional/worship focus), with the **head** (academic focus), so that we can connect these truths to our **hands** (focus of application/ actions steps). The Church follows God’s priorities when we are **(1) Exalting the Savior** (Monday’s lessons), **(2) Equipping the Saints** (Tuesday’s lessons), and **(3) Evangelizing Sinners** (Wednesday’s lessons). We had a good balance of the theological with the practical. We even took spiritual gift inventories and worked through how to lead a soul to Christ.



I enjoyed spending time with each of these men and was impressed with their desire to grow. It was encouraging to have everyone participate. Would you **pray with me** for each of these pastors by name and ask God specifically to help their churches to exalt the Savior, equip the saints, and evangelize sinners? Each one of them was saved because Marco made an intentional effort to build a **redemptive relationship**. May they do the same with new disciples. As we said our goodbyes and they returned to their respective ministries, I thought to myself, “**What a breath of fresh air,**” to witness their eagerness to listen, but then also to go apply.



I preached again for their Wednesday night service on the question, “Do You Love Me?” (John 21:1-17) That was the question Jesus asked Peter when He restored him to ministry following his denial.

Thank you for your partnership!



The night before, Marco, Gwendolyn, and I went to the mall at the Port of Cancún at sunset to walk along the boardwalk. There is just something relaxing and calming about water. As we walked, we discussed **God’s providence**, in introducing them to each other and leading them to Cancún, and in God leading me to join the team of **EMU International**. The sun had set, and we stared up at the stars. Marco opened an app on his iPhone called **SkyView Lite**. As he pointed it at the stars, the app showed the name of each star and even outlined the constellations. Pretty cool, huh? I was reminded of something Layton Talbert said in his book on providence. He described how not all magnifying devices are the same. Microscopes make tiny things look large. “Telescopes magnify those distant bodies, bringing them ‘closer’ to the eye and helping us better appreciate their immensity.” That is what we are called upon to do, to exalt the Savior.

Marco and I left his home around 5:15 a.m. Friday morning, so that I would catch my 7:30 a.m. flight. Upon boarding my American Airlines flight to Miami, we were told that we could remove our face coverings. I did so and took in a deep breath of **fresh air**. Reflecting on the trip, it is the people and God’s work that causes me such encouragement. Each one of these trips is like a breath of fresh air.

To view an online album of my trip to Mexico visit <https://emuinternational.org/jeffmexico/>

Your prayers are appreciated as we host **Billy Judson**, from **India** for four weeks, **May 22-June 23**. I will be taking him to different churches where we will share his ministry and Lord willing be able to find some new ministry partners for him. We will be in NC, SC, IN, KY, and TN. Pray God’s provision and for the scheduling details and protection as we travel.

